



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TAJIKISTAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

TAJIKISTAN'S GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZE NATIONAL MARATHON FOR WORLD AIDS DAY

December 1, 2008, Dushanbe. Every year on December 1st, World AIDS Day, individuals and organizations from around the world come together to draw attention to the global AIDS epidemic. This year the 1st of December marks the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day. Tajikistan's National Coordination Committee to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria, which is comprised of high level government officials, representatives of donor organizations, local and international NGOs, initiated a national marathon of public awareness activities, "Only Together Can We Defeat AIDS."

The marathon demonstrated the clear commitment of Tajikistan's government and the international community to combating AIDS, and the involvement of all levels of Tajik society in national response to HIV epidemics. The marathon lasted November 24-29 in all regions of the country and consisted of a number of activities including: distribution of printed materials on how to prevent HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases to the general population, school and university students, women, and potential migrants; televised public service announcements about HIV/AIDS; essay contests among secondary school students; and, theatrical performances on HIV/AIDS. During the marathon closing and sizing up ceremony that took place in "Kohi Borbad" hall Deputy Prime Minister Rookiya Kurbanova Minister of Health Nusratullo Salimov and acting head of UN mission in Tajikistan Iliya Todorovich gave a speech. Tajik pop stars Jurabek Murodov, Nobovar Chanorov, Parvina Shukrullaeva and others gave a free concert.

The USAID-funded CAPACITY project, one of the main stakeholders in HIV/AIDS in Tajikistan since 2004, along with other donors and international organizations, provided financial and technical assistance in organizing the World AIDS Day activities. CAPACITY also provided the National AIDS Center with caps and T-shirts with the marathon slogan and logo for volunteers, supported in the final event in Dushanbe Kohi Borbad concert hall, and provided 100,000 condoms donated by USAID to Dushanbe's AIDS Center and National Healthy Lifestyle Center to be distributed among event attendants.

HIV/AIDS prevention is a priority for the U.S. Government and for USAID. The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has already provided \$18.8 billion in HIV/AIDS funding worldwide, and the U.S. Congress has authorized up to \$48 billion for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria over the next five years.



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The CAPACITY project is one of the many assistance projects implemented in Tajikistan by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on behalf of the American people. It assists Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in launching large-scale responses to HIV/AIDS epidemics among vulnerable populations. The project is managed by JSI Research and Training Institute, Inc. For more information please visit the Project web-site: www.capacityproject.info. Since 1993 the American people through USAID have provided about \$300 million in assistance programs that support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and education systems of Tajikistan.